

Message Text

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45

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AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

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SUBJECT OIL EXPLORATION DRILLING BY U S FIRM GLOBAL MARINE

REF: (A) STATE 134046 (B) ISTANBUL 1906

(C) ISTANBUL 2325

1. PROJECT OFFICER (ERNEST KERUGER) FOR GLOBAL MARINE OIL EXPLORATION DRILLING OPERATIONS IN TURKEY (SEE REFTELS) CALLED ON CONGEN OFFICERS JULY 19 TO INFORM US THAT TURKISH PETROLEUM AUTHORITY (TPAO) HAD DECIDED THAT THIRD SITE FOR DRILLING BY GLOMAR V WOULD BE IN MOUTH OF GULF OF SAROS BAY BETWEEN THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA AND WESTERN END OF TURKISH THRACE. HE HAD NOT YET BEEN INFORMED OF THE PRECISE COORDINATES BUT EXPECTED TO HAVE THEM BEFORE END OF WEEK. THIRD SITE CALLS FOR DRILLIOG TO ABOUT 10,000 FEET WHICH MEANS THAT OPERATIONS IN THIS LOCATION WOULD LAST FROM ONE TO TWO MONTHS ACCORDING TO PROJECTED SCHEDULE, DRILLING RIG WILL MOVE IN 8 TO 10 DAYS (I.E., BEGINNING ABOUT JULY WUTH).

2. WITH CURRENT SPATE OF PUBLICITY SURROUNDING ENTRY OF SISMIK

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I INTO AEGEAN WE EXPRESSED TO KREUGER OUR STRONG RESERVATIONS

ABOUT US FIRM DRILLING IN AREA CLOSE TO GREEK-TURKISH BORDER, EVEN THOUGH SITE APPEARS TO BE WELL WITHIN TURKISH TERRITORIAL WATERS. WE ALSO NOTED THAT TIMING IS PARTICULARLY UNFORTUNATE IN LIGHT OF RECENT NEWSPAPER REPORTS THAT SISMİK I WILL ENTER AEGEAN JULY 27TH TO BEGIN SEISMIC ACTIVITIES IN AREA BETWEEN SAROS BAY AND BOZCA ISLAND

3. WE WOULD SEE NO OBJECTION TO GLOMAR DRILLING IN SAROS BAY LATER IN YEAR IF AEGEAN SITUATION IMPROVES. PRESENT TIMING HOWEVER WOULD PLACE GLOMAR V IN HIGHLY EXPOSED AND SENSITIVE POSITION IN EVENT CLASHES OCCUR OVER SISMİK I. IF ANKARA CONCURS, WE RECOMMEND DEPARTMENT DISCUSS MATTER WITH GLOMAR REPS TO ENSURE THEY AWARE POTENTIAL HAZARDS OF PRESENT PLANS SINCE KREUGER UNDER IMPRESSION THAT DRILLING AT THIS SITE DECISION HE CAN MAKE WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH HOME OFFICE

4. RECOGNIZE THAT IF GLOBAL MARINE DECIDES NOT TO PROCEED TO SAROS BAY AT THIS TIME USG ROLE IN POINTING OUT HAZARDS WILL COME TO THE ATTENTION OF TURKISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. SOME OF THESE NO DOUBT WILL BE RESENTFUL OF WHAT THEY MAY CONSIDER TO BE USG INTERFERENCE IN A PRIVATE CONTRACT BETWEEN TPAO AND GLOBAL MARINE. WE COULD ALSO EXPECT CERTAIN LEVELS IN MINISTRY OF ENERGY, WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TPAO ACTIVITIES, TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO PRESS SOURCES WHICH WILL ATTEMPT TO CAST USG IN UNFAVORABLE LIGHT IN THIS MATTER BUT

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